[Mr. S. Parameswara Aiyar.]

MR. S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR (*Secretary to Government*): (1) The rates of *kolevila* vary according to the species of timber to be worked down and the distance of the felling areas from the depôts. They average, at present, from 8 to 14 annas per cubic foot.

(2) Yes. There was an increase in recent years. The increase ranges from 1 to 2 annas per cubic foot. In 1098, however, there was a decrease in most places.

Irregularities in re Extraction and Sale of Timber.

171. MR. A. GOVINDA MENON (*Alangad* cum *Parur*): Will the Government be pleased to state:

(1) whether all contracts for the extraction of timber and all sales of timber were properly advertised and whether tenders were called for during the last two years; and

(2) whether it is not a common practice that, subsequent to the opening of tenders, statements are recorded from certain tenderers and others and that contracts are given to them by private negotiation?

MR. S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR (*Secretary to Government*): (*a*) The answer is in the affirmative.

(*b*) Contracts are settled by negotiation only when tenderers are not forthcoming or when the rates tendered by them are found unacceptable.

MR. A. GOVINDA MENON (*Alangad* cum *Parur*): Will the Government be pleased to state what they mean by the words "found unacceptable"? Do they mean that the tender is not sufficiently low or the tenderer has not got sufficient security?

MR. S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR (*Secretary to Government*): 'Unacceptable' is what cannot be accepted in the interests of the department. That might be due to a variety of reasons.

Private Timber Depôts of Supply Contractors.

172. MR. A. GOVINDA MENON (*Alangad* cum *Parur*): Will the Government be pleased to state:

(1) the number and names of timber-supply contractors who own private sale depôts in the neighbourhood of Government sale depôts;

(2) the number and names of such contractors who have their private sale depôts at places higher up the routes along which timber is floated down to Government depôts; and

(3) whether the proximity of such private depôts does not adversely affect the sale at Government depôts?

MR. S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR (*Secretary to Government*): (1) and (2). No supply contractor of the department has any private sale depôt near Government sale depôts or anywhere higher up

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floating streams. Nor is any such contractor allowed to trade in timber during the currency of his contract.

(3) The question does not arise, in view of the answer to parts (1) and (2).

MR. A. GOVINDA MENON (*Alangad* cum *Parur*): Will the Government be pleased to state whether any near relatives of these same contractors possess depôts near the same depôt?

MR. S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR (*Secretary to Government*): Government are not aware.

Sale of Timber by Contractors at Government Depôts.

173. MR. A. GOVINDA MENON (*Alangad* cum *Parur*): Will the Government be pleased to state:

(1) whether they do not allow sale contractors to keep and sell the timber purchased by them from Government depôts at those depôts;

(2) whether, if they do so allow, such a course does not prejudicially affect the sale of timber left unsold at such Government depôts at the time; and

(3) whether in all those cases they charge any ground-rent for permission to keep and sell such timber and whether there is any time-limit for such permission?

MR. S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR (*Secretary to Government*):

(1) The answer is in the negative, if by the expression 'sale contractors' the member means purchasers of timber from depôts.

(2) and (3) These questions do not arise, in view of the answer to part (1).

Mortality among Wild Elephants.

174. MR. A. GOVINDA MENON (*Alangad* cum *Parur*): Will the Government be pleased to state:

(1) whether the Divisional Forest Officer, Northern Division, has reported that mortality among wild elephants was unusually large in that Division in 1098;

(2) whether, in case such a report has been made, Government have made any enquiry as regards the mortality of wild elephants in the other divisions of the State and whether they will state the results of such enquiry, if any;

(3) whether they have received any report as to the number of wild elephants washed away by the flood that occurred during the latter part of 1098 in the Periyar, and whether, if such a report has been received, they would state the number of cow elephants and tuskers so washed away, as also whether in each case any *mahazar* was prepared by the forest authorities; and

(4) whether they will enquire whether there were any cases of shooting wild elephants by the owners or servants of the registry holders of the lands lying alongside of the High Range road?

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